

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 1, with the following paragraph:

The present application is related to ~~U.S. patent application serial no. 09/547,504 filed April 12, 2000~~ U.S. Patent Number 6,398,436, issued June 4, 2002, entitled "Spill Protection for Electronic Devices" and is incorporated by reference herein. The above-identified U.S. patent application is directed to protect various types of electronic equipment, one embodiment of the invention will be described with reference to a computer keyboard as shown in Figures 1-4. Specifically with reference to Figure 1, is shown the front side of a mobile laptop keyboard assembly with a prior art metal tray for spill collection. The metal tray 13 is typical in the prior art for protecting keyboards from spills. Figure 2 shows the back side of the same keyboard 11 as in Figure 1. The back side view of keyboard 11 in Figure 2 shows the details of the metal tray 13. In particular, it shows various openings and other formations 15 that allow for access to and penetration of electronic and mechanical elements such as the keypad and individual keys, and other mechanical switches or elements. These keys in turn are used to encode the underlying circuitry with the circuitry on the circuit assembly 17 as shown in Figure 3. Figure 3 shows the outside or top portion 19 of a sealed silver membrane circuit assembly, and Figure 4 shows the bottom portion of a sealed silver membrane circuit assembly. The circuit assembly in Figures 3 and 4 has openings and formations 19 that allow for access to the electronic circuitry of the circuit assembly 17. The absorbent structure of the present invention would typically be placed on top portion 19 of the circuit assembly 17 as in Figure 3.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 6, with the following paragraph:

Users of mobile laptops, for example, commonly carry their laptops with them. Mobile laptops are therefore much more subject to potential compromise from contamination if a user is eating or drinking at the same time as using a laptop. The dust particulates are then collected during a liquid spill, resulting in poor key actuation due to a phenomenon known as "sticky key" in the industry. ~~The '133 patent application~~ U.S. Patent Number 6,398,436 serves to allow for the liquid and other soluble entities to be quickly absorbed into the super gel absorbent material. However, without the application of a protectant on critical surfaces, residues from a liquid spill may accumulate on sensitive surfaces of the laptop, resulting in keyboard failure due to the "sticky key" phenomenon.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 3, with the following paragraph:

In an improvement of the present invention, in a second embodiment, the mating surfaces on the keyboard and keypad are coated with a protectant material such as Scotchgard, in conjunction with the use of an absorbant membrane described in ~~the '133 patent application~~ U.S. Patent Number 6,398,436 which fits over openings between layers in the keyboard. Liquids that are spilled on the top of the keyboard will be then repelled by the protectant material such as Scotch-Gard, and will consequently run around the keys and be absorbed by the membrane

absorbent structure beneath. Accordingly, through the cooperation of the protectant and the membrane absorbant structure, the liquid would be repelled by the protectant and the absorbant material would attract the liquid therefore ensuring sticking does not occur.